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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 001655

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/28/2021

TAGS: [PREL](#) [TU](#) [CY](#) [UNFICYP](#)

SUBJECT: URGING A POSITIVE TURKISH APPROACH TO CYPRUS  
TECHNICAL TALKS

REF: A. STATE 42725

[1](#)B. 16 MARCH 2006 LIBBY/BLAHA E-MAIL

Classified by CDA Nancy McEldowney, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: DCM urged MFA Deputy U/S Apakan on March 24 to set a positive agenda for upcoming technical talks between Turkish and Greek Cypriots, and to develop a good working relationship with SRSG Moeller (refs A and B). Apakan blamed Moeller for what he termed the "professional mistake" of the February joint press statement about the talks, but claimed the Turkish side has no problems with him. The Turkish side is still nervous that the technical talks will eclipse Annan Plan-based overall settlement efforts. DCM pointed out that with overall settlement efforts stalled, the technical talks are Turkey's best opportunity to regain momentum on Cyprus. End Summary.

U.S. Concerns About Turkey's Lost Momentum  
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[1](#)2. (C) DCM stated that Turkey and the U.S. share the same priority goal: that Cyprus not derail Turkish EU accession. The U.S. is pleased with the UN willingness to sponsor technical talks and Turkey should be as well, since they would take place under UN aegis between Turkish and Greek Cypriot leaders.

[1](#)3. (C) Apakan agreed the technical talks proposal is positive. Apakan claimed Turkey had not overreacted to what it viewed as a series of negative recent developments: the February 22 attempted entry to a Turkish port of a Greek Cypriot ship; the EU financial regulation; the February 28 joint press statement. Apakan called the press statement a "professional mistake." Apakan blamed the statement on Moeller but Gambari's letter clarifying the statement had been helpful.

[1](#)4. (C) DCM expressed concern that Turkey has lost momentum on Cyprus. The technical talks are potentially advantageous for Turkey and Turkish Cypriots, who do not have to agree to discuss topics they feel are inappropriate. SRSG Moeller is here to stay and Turkey would do well to develop good working contact with him. Turkey's recent complaining about Moeller has been counterproductive.

Turkish Concerns About the Annan Plan

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15. (C) Apakan insisted Turkey has "no problem" with Moeller and that Talat had put off meeting with Moeller only due to health reasons. However, Apakan said there needs to be clarity that the Annan Plan remains the only basis for settlement. If the Annan Plan is scrapped, it would be impossible to recoup the UN's energy for another final settlement effort. Apakan claimed P-5 member Russia was attempting to get rid of the Plan.

16. (C) Northeastern Mediterranean Affairs DDG Bilman added that it would be difficult to get domestic consensus in Turkey for another settlement plan should the Annan Plan be scrapped. Bilman, who was in the bureaucratic trenches during intense 2004 negotiations, said getting consensus on the Annan Plan had been an enormous and politically costly effort. Bilman said he is in contact with Moeller and Turkey is prepared to work with him. However, Moeller should be careful to understand the need for Turkey's agreement in order to move forward, not just the P-5's, and should do nothing to let Papadopoulos off the hook on the Annan Plan.

17. (C) DCM assured Apakan that the Plan is still on the table, but with overall settlement efforts stalled, the technical talks are the best chance for movement on the UN front. Turkey should make a public statement of support for the talks and seek ways to take more constructive steps with the UN. Turkey needs to shift the focus, publicly take the initiative, and set a positive agenda for the talks. Apakan said Turkey would take a positive approach.

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